(c) Government has not received any proposal for issue of a special postage stamp on the Kumbha Mela of Allahabad.

Statement

List of proposals to be placed before the PAC

1. Poultry Production
2. William Booth
3. Choudhary Brahm Prakash
4. Golden Jubilee Year of Central Excise under the Central Board of Excise & Customs.
5. St. George College
6. Siyaram Sharan Gupt
7. 125th Anniversary of Ammunition Factory, Khadki, Pune
8. Kerala Varma Viliya Koil Thampuran
9. Shivappa Nayak & Rani Chennamma
10. Gopi Krishna
11. Shri Bibhuti Bhushan Bandyopadhyaya
12. Shri Tenneti Viswanatham
13. World Tourism Organisation
14. 50th Anniversary of Food & Agriculture Organisation in 1995
15. Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja
16. Anant Gopal Sheorey
17. Mahadji Scindia
18. Vaid Surat Singh
19. Master Mitra Sen
20. Ravi Samrat Dr. Viswanatha Satyanarayana
21. Devika Rani
22. Punjab National Bank
23. Safe Blood
24. Florence Nightingale
25. Maharaja Hari Singh
26. Birth Centenary of Dr. Salim Ali
27. Padam Bhushan Pandit Kunjilal Dube
28. Hemanta Kumar Basu
29. 150th Anniversary of Birth of Thomas Alva Edison
30. Agri Horticulture Society—Calcutta
31. Pt. Lakshmi Kanta Maitra
32. Dr. Chintamanrao Dcshmukh 33. Shahccd Kartar Singh Sarabha
34. Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeo Botany
35. Stamp on 'Cellular Jail'
36. Sarah Tucker College
37. Pandurang Vaman Kane
38. Alfred Nobel
39. Bhagat Puran Singh
40. University of Rourkee
41. Shri Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar
42. Shri Deshpran Krishnantha Sarma.

Deteriorating Postal Services in the Country

2398. SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the deteriorating postal services in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that as a result of the negligence and serious delays the letters/money orders posted from one part of the country, specially villages, take months and years to reach their destinations;

(c) whether Government are also aware that the acknowledged receipts of registered letters are seldom received by the senders because of the negligence of postal authorities;

(d) what are the reasons that even the ordinary mail has started taking at least a week or so for delivery from one metropolitan twon to other metropolitan town; and

(e) the steps Government propose to take to restore the efficiency of the postal system which existed before the introduction of the Speed Post?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Department has laid down broad standards for mail services in the country. There is no indication that the services are deteriorating.

(b) No, Sir. Department makes every effort to deliver letters and money

orders within the broad norms laid down by it. However, occasional delays are not ruled out.

(c) In the process of handling over 300 million registered letters in a year, approximately 20,000 complaints are received which pertain to non-receipt of Acknowledgement Cards. These represent a small percentage of the total registered traffic.

(d) PIN coded Inter-metro letter mails are normally delivered within 48 hours. However, occasional delays are not ruled out, which are primarily because of (a) seasonal fluctuations in traffic (b) Staff complements not being commensurate with the volume of work and (c) transport disruptions.

(e) Speed Post is a fast service at a higher tariff, among specified stations. Its introduction has not affected the ordinary mail service. To improve the efficiency of the ordinary mail service further, Department has:

(a) Introduced a special priortisation for mail of specified nature between specified stations.
(b) automated mail processing in Bombay.
(c) made special facilitation centres for business mail of large volumes.
(d) refined mail processing and transmission systems.
(e) modernised lodgement services by use of computerised counter machines.
(f) provided identifiable Acknowledgement Cards to prevent loss in course of transmission.

Deterioration in Telephone Services

2399. SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to news-item which appeared in the 'Nav Bharat Times' dated the 16th February, 1995 under the caption "Zara dekhiye, aap ka phone so to nahin gaya hai";

(b) if so, what are the problems raised therein;

(c) whether it is a fact that the services rendered by MTNL to Delhi telephone subscribers in respect of fault repairs, payment of telephone bills, etc. have deteriorated considerably;

(d) whether Government are aware that the officers are generally *not* available to subscribers on telephones in their offices, as well as residences, because their telephones are kept engaged;

(e) whether any discussion have been held with the officers to sort out the problems faced by Delhi telephone subscribers and if so, the decisions arrived at; and

(f) whether Government have ever conducted surprise checks on the problems faced by subscribers, during the last three years; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, it highlights certain problems like delayed rectification of faults, inconvenience in payment of telephone bills etc.

(c) No Sir, the services rendered by MTNL are satisfactory. However, continuous efforts are being made to improve the service further.

(d) No Sir, all Officers under MTNL have specific instructions that the telephones must be answered. However at times the telephones may be genuinely busy.

(e) Yes, regular management meetings are held and problems of subscribers are being sorted out.

(f) Surprise checks are conducted from time to time and as a result, action has